

SONG **Spotlight**

The Church's One Foundation
by Samuel John Stone



FELLOWSHIP
BIBLE CHURCH

Edited and printed in the United States
by Fellowship Bible Church
fbcva.org | 2025



Song Spotlight

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Verse 1:

The church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ her Lord,
She is His new creation
By water and the Word.
From heaven He came and sought her
To be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her
And for her life He died.

Verse 2:

Elect from every nation
Yet one over all the earth;
Her charter of salvation,
One Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy Name she blesses,
Partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses,
With every grace endued.

Verse 3:

Though with a scornful wonder
Men see her sore oppressed,
By schisms rent asunder,
By heresies distressed,
Yet saints their watch are keeping;
Their cry goes up, "How long?"
And soon the night of weeping
Shall be the morn of song.

The Church's One Foundation

Verse 4:

The church shall never perish,
Her dear Lord to defend
To guide, sustain and cherish,
Is with her to the end
Though there be those that hate her,
And false sons in her pale
Against a foe or traitor,
She ever shall prevail

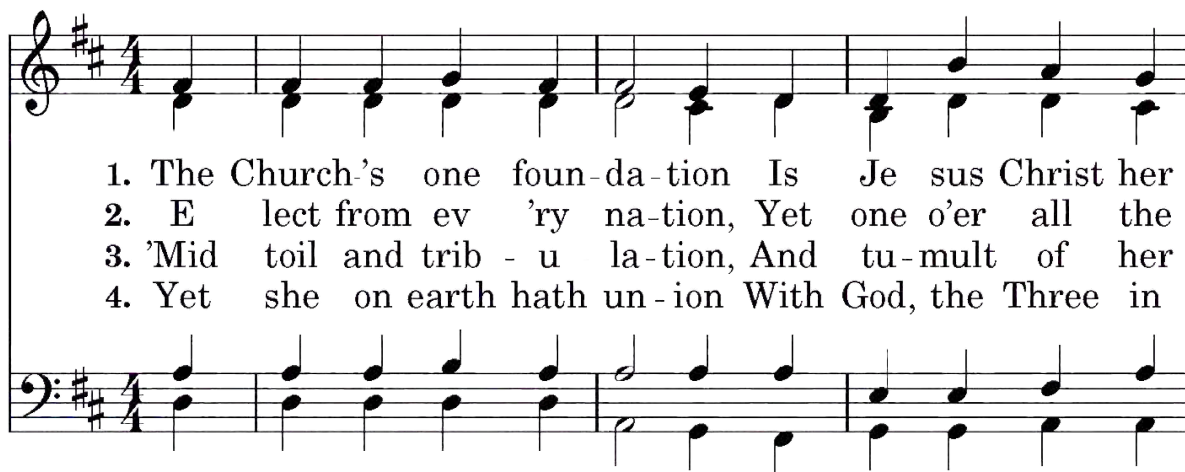
Verse 5:

Mid toil and tribulation,
And tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation
Of peace forevermore;
'Til, with the vision glorious,
Her longing eyes are blessed,
And the great church victorious
Shall be the church at rest.

Verse 6:

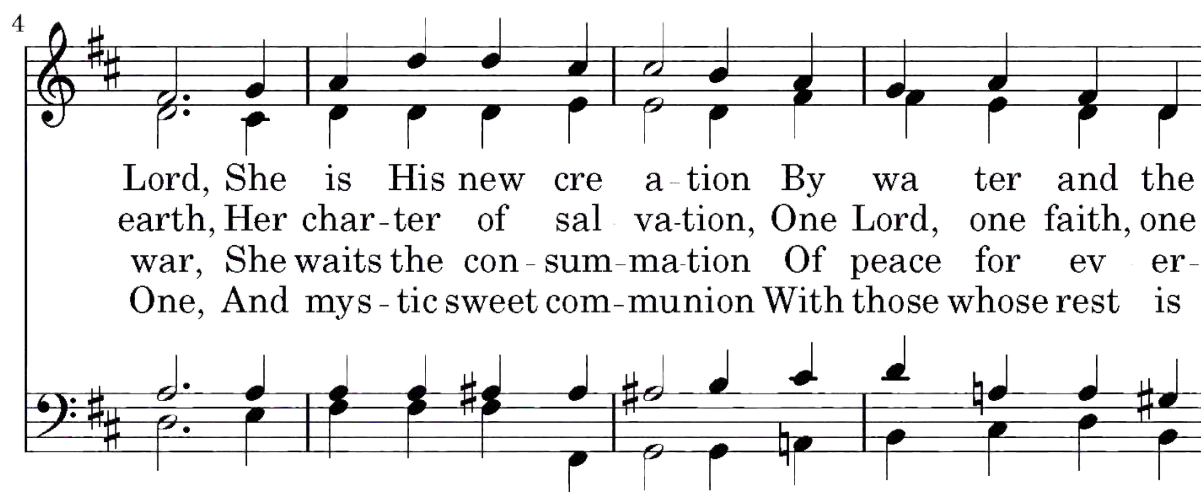
Yet she on earth hath union
With God the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion
With those whose rest is won.
O happy ones and holy!
Lord, give us grace that we
Like them, the meek and lowly,
On high may dwell with Thee.

The Church's One Foundation



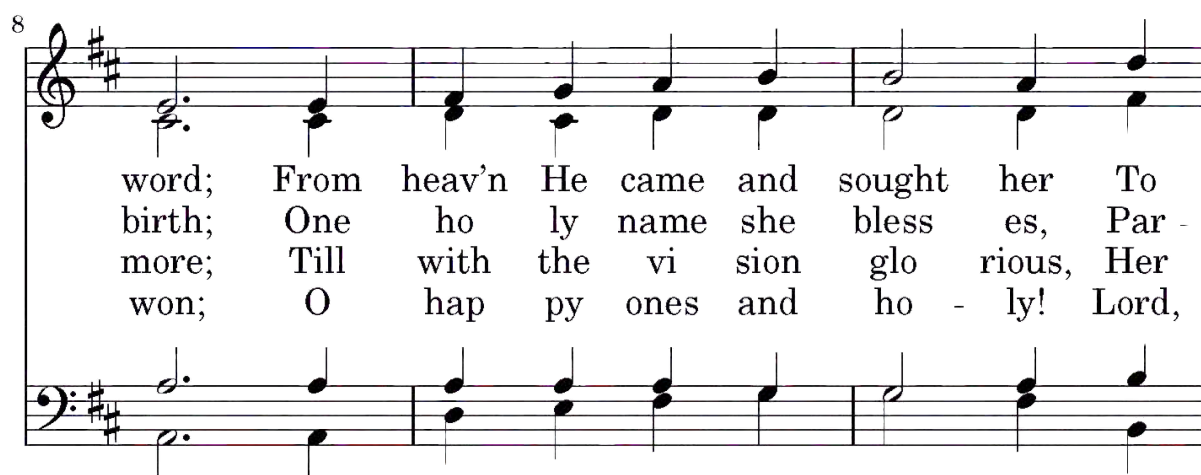
1. The Church's one foun-da-tion Is Je sus Christ her
 2. E lect from ev 'ry na-tion, Yet one o'er all the
 3. 'Mid toil and trib - u la-tion, And tu-mult of her
 4. Yet she on earth hath un-ion With God, the Three in

4



Lord, She is His new cre a-tion By wa ter and the
 earth, Her char-ter of sal va-tion, One Lord, one faith, one
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8



word; From heav'n He came and sought her To
 birth; One ho ly name she bless es, Par -
 more; Till with the vi sion glo rious, Her
 won; O hap py ones and ho - ly! Lord,

11

be His ho - ly bride; With His own blood He
takes one ho - ly food, And to one hope she
long - ing eyes are blest, And the great Church vic -
give us grace that we Like them, the meek and

14

bought her, And for her life He died.
press - es, With ev - 'ry grace en - dued.
to - rious Shall be the Church at rest.
low - ly, On high may dwell with Thee.

The Church's One Foundation by Samuel J. Stone | Samuel S. Wesley

Intro and turn - |D / / / |D^{sus} / / / |D / / / |D^{sus} / / / |

The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord
She is His new creation by water and the Word
From heav'n He came and sought her to be His holy bride
With His own blood He bought her and for her life He died

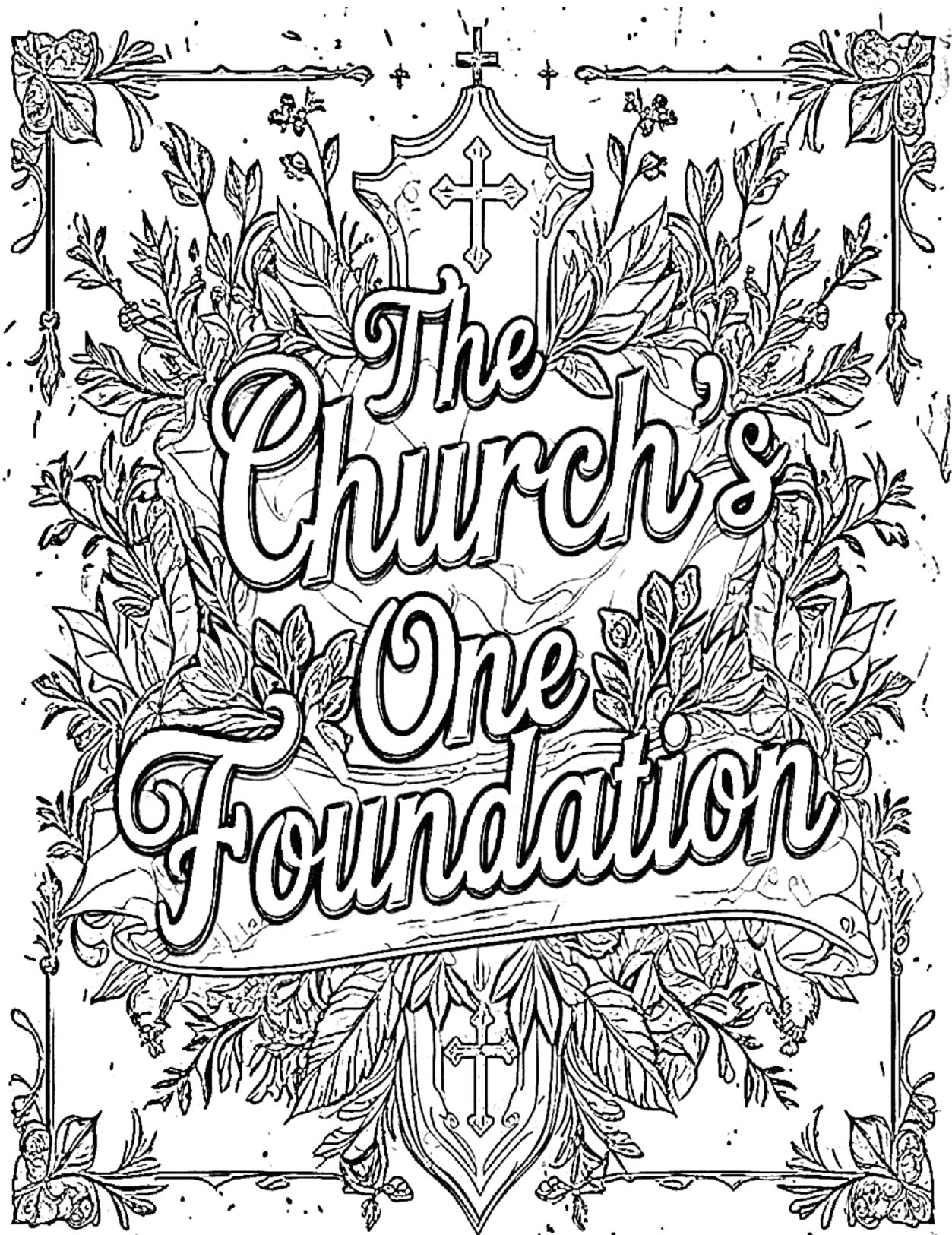
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One holy Name she bless-es, partakes one holy food
And to one hope she presses with ev'ry grace endued

Though with a scornful wonder, men see her sore oppressed
By schisms rent asunder by heresies distressed
Yet saints their watch are keep-ing their cry goes up, "How long?"
And soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song

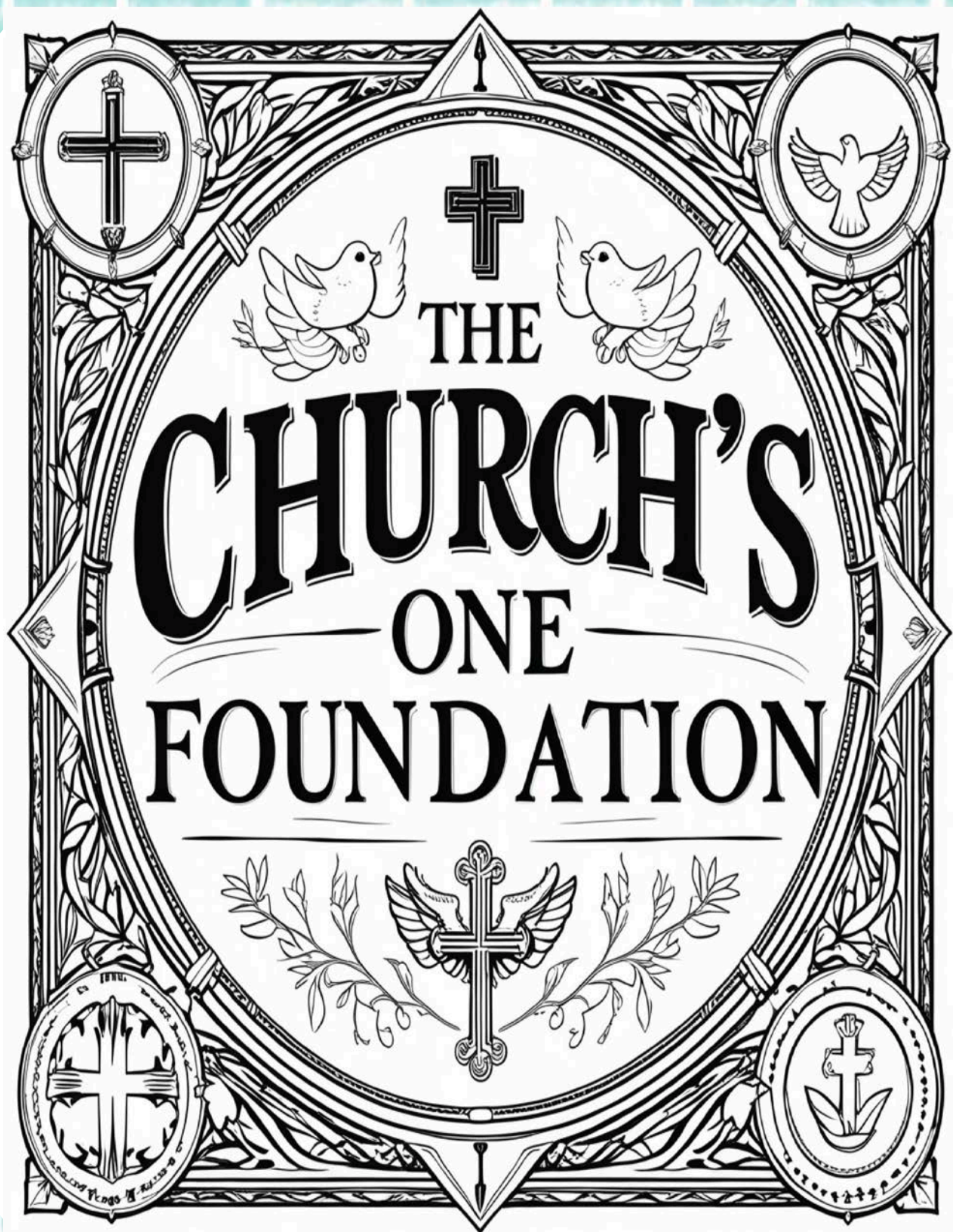
The church shall never perish! her dear Lord, to defend
To guide, sustain, and cherish is with her to the end
Though there be those that hate her and false sons in her pale
Against the foe or traitor she ever shall prevail

'Mid toil and tribulation and tumult of her war
She waits the consummation of peace forevermore
Till, with the vision glor-ious her longing eyes are blest
And the great church victorious shall be the church at rest

Yet she on earth hath union with God the Three in One
And mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won
O happy ones and ho - ly! Lord, give us grace that we
Like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with Thee







SAY What??

Language changes over time. In the 1920s, if someone thought something was ridiculous, they might say “Applesauce!” or “Poppycock!” Today, we might say, “That’s whacked!”

The hymn *The Church’s One Foundation* was written over 150 years ago. On top of that, hymn writers often use poetic language to fit the music, which can make the words feel unfamiliar or hard to understand.

To sing this hymn with understanding—and worship with your heart—it helps to know what these words meant when they were written. Below are some key words from the hymn, defined using the 1828 Webster’s Dictionary to reflect the author’s original intent:

Vocabulary from the HYMN (Alphabetized)

Asunder - to divide

Charter - rights and privileges granted to someone

Cherish - to treat with care and encourage

Consummation - the end

Elect - chosen or selected - the people God shows mercy to

Endued - to enrich or furnish with any gift

Foe - an enemy

Hath - modern English uses the word has

Heresies - teaching that goes against the Bible

Morn - short for morning

Pale - in this case it probably means inside the influence of the church (like a fence)

Partakes - to have a part of or share

Perish - to die

Presses - to continue on with force

Rent - to tear

Scornful - to dislike

Schisms - divisions

Sore - severely

Sought - to look for in the past

Sustain - to support; as, a foundation

Tumult - stirred up with a lot of noise

HYMN Reflection

Now, read through the hymn slowly. Try to picture what each line means using the definitions above. You might even want to underline or highlight the words you now understand better.

The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is His new creation, by water and the Word;
From heav'n He came and sought her to be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her, and for her life He died.

Elect from ev'ry nation, yet one o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation, one Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy Name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses, with ev'ry grace endued.

Tho' with a scornful wonder, men see her sore oppressed,
By schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed,
Yet saints their watch are keeping, their cry goes up, "How long?"
And soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.

The church shall never perish! Her dear Lord, to defend,
To guide, sustain, and cherish, is with her to the end;
Tho' there be those that hate her and false sons in her pale,
Against the foe or traitor she ever shall prevail.

'Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation of peace for evermore;
Till with the vision glorious her longing eyes are blest,
And the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union with God the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won.

O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we,
Like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with Thee

Rewrite Challenge

Try rewriting each line of the hymn in your own words! Here's a start:

EXAMPLES:

Original: The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord;

Modern: The rock that holds the church together is Jesus

Original: She is His new creation, by water and the Word;

Modern: The Church is Christ's new creation, born out of the Spirit's work through the preaching of the gospel and signified/confirmed in baptism

YOUR TURN:

Original: From heav'n He came and sought her to be His holy bride;

Modern: -----

Original: With His own blood He bought her, and for her life He died.

Modern: -----

Original: Elect from ev'ry nation, yet one o'er all the earth,

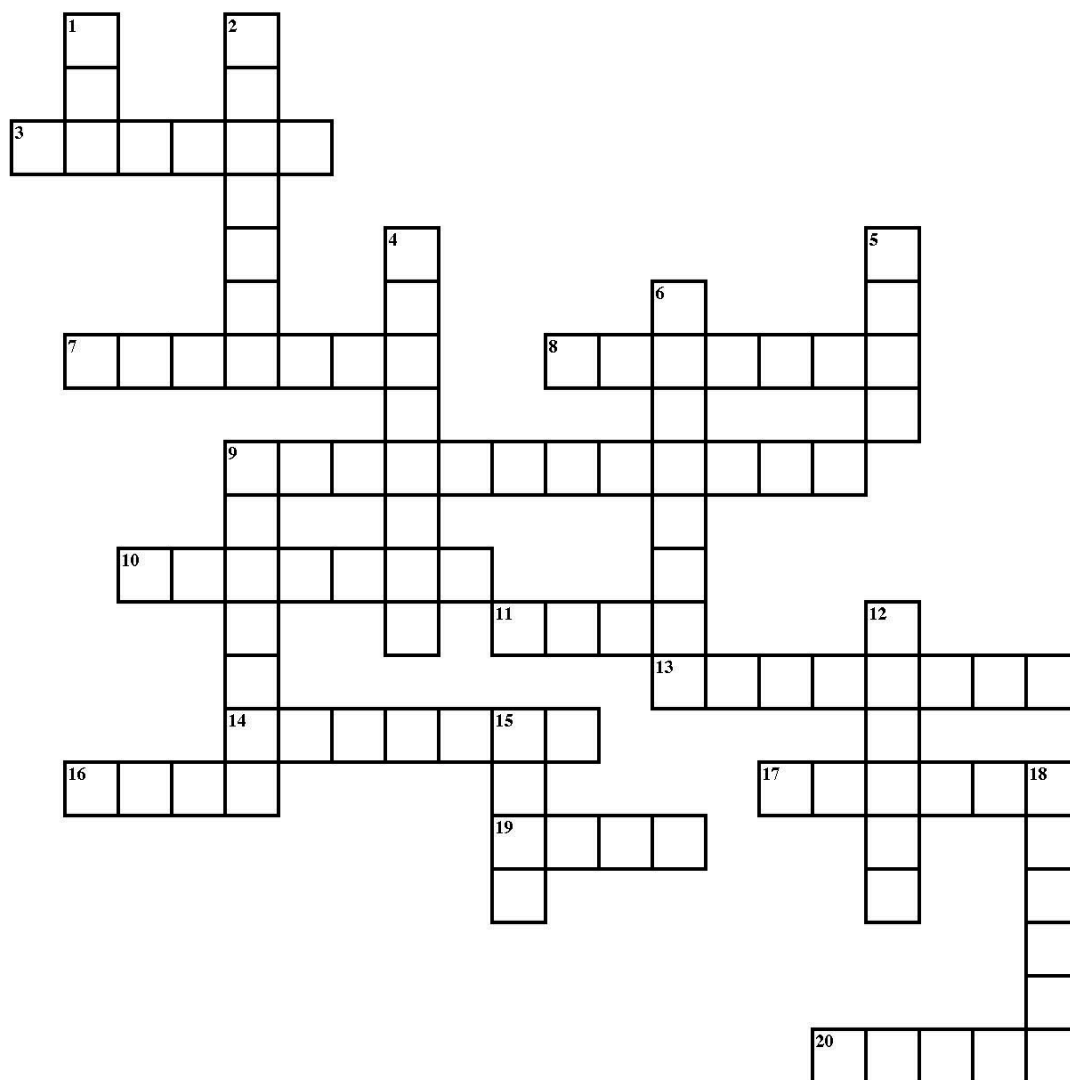
Modern: -----

Original: Her charter of salvation, one Lord, one faith, one birth;

Modern: -----

The Church's One Foundation

Crossword Puzzle



Across

- [3] to die
- [7] to divide
- [8] rights granted
- [9] the end
- [10] to continue on with force
- [11] inside the church
- [13] to dislike
- [14] divisions
- [16] has
- [17] to look for in the past
- [19] to tear
- [20] chosen or selected

Down

- [1] an enemy
- [2] to support
- [4] teaching that is untrue
- [5] severely
- [6] to have a part of or share
- [9] to treat with care
- [12] to enrich with any gift
- [15] short for morning
- [18] stirred up and noisy

The Age of S.J. Stone

Samuel John Stone

was an English poet, hymn writer and priest in the church of England. He is most famous for writing the "Church's One Foundation. Here are some things that happened in the world during His lifetime.



Samuel John Stone is born in Staffordshire

Charles Darwin publishes Origin of the Species



American Civil War



Bishop Consulo of South Africa charged with Heresy



Lyra Fidelium; Twelve Hymns on the Twelve Articles of the Apostles' Creed



Opening of the Suez Canal



Invention of the Telephone by Alexander Graham Bell



The death of Samuel J. Stone



About Samuel J. Stone



Samuel John Stone (1839-1900) was an Anglican priest, poet, and hymn writer whose ministry and literary work were deeply shaped by theological controversy and pastoral devotion. He spent most of His life in the area surrounding London and had a very impactful ministry there during the sometimes dark days of the Industrial Revolution. Educated at Charterhouse and Pembroke College, Oxford, Stone was ordained in 1862 by Bishop Wilberforce. His early ministry in Windsor saw the publication of *Lyra Fidelium* (1866), a collection of twelve hymns based on the Apostles' Creed. Concerned that many Christians recited the Creed without understanding its meaning, Stone wrote hymns to explain and defend each article. His most famous hymn, *The Church's One Foundation*, interprets Article IX—"I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints"

The Church's One Foundation was inspired by a rising skepticism about biblical authority, particularly the controversy sparked by *Essays and Reviews* (1860) and Bishop John William Colenso's *Pentateuch and Book of Joshua Critically Examined* (1862-63), which denied Mosaic authorship and questioned the historical reliability of Scripture. Originally composed with seven stanzas, the hymn was later revised and expanded for ecclesiastical use, including a ten-stanza version for Salisbury Cathedral in 1885.

Stone's pastoral career included twenty years as vicar of St. Paul's, Haggerston, where he served a poor East London parish with tireless energy, building schools and defending Church education. Later, as rector of All Hallows', London Wall, he restored the church and pioneered outreach to commuting women. His hymns, poems, and sermons reflect a deep love for Christ, the Church, and the people he served. He died peacefully in 1900, leaving behind a legacy of theological clarity, poetic beauty, and enduring devotion.



The Apostles' Creed

When Samuel J. Stone noticed that people in his church were reciting the Apostles' Creed without understanding its meaning, he wrote poems to help explain the creed. He wrote twelve poems, one for each numbered line. When we worship, it's important that we truly mean the words we say to God. Below is the Apostles' Creed. As you read it, ask yourself: Are there any words or phrases you don't understand?

The Apostles' Creed

1. I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
2. And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord;
3. Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary;
4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell;
5. The third day He rose again from the dead;
6. He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
7. From there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
8. I believe in the Holy Spirit;
9. I believe in the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints;
10. The forgiveness of sins;
11. The resurrection of the body;
12. And the life everlasting. Amen.

What is a Creed?

A creed is a short statement that summarizes key beliefs of the Christian faith. Creeds are not Scripture, but they are historical and traditional documents that many Christians around the world recite regularly. They help us remember and define what we believe.

Ways to Use the Apostles' Creed as a Family

1. Explore the Bible Together

Look up Bible verses that support each line of the Creed.

This helps connect the words to Scripture and deepens understanding.

- Line 1 - Matthew 5:45; Genesis 1:1; Romans 1:20
- Line 2 - Matthew 3:17; Philippians 2:12
- Line 3 - Luke 1:35; Luke 2:7
- Line 4 - John 19:16; John 19:29-42; 1 Peter 3:19-20
- Line 5 - Matthew 28:1-10; John 20:11-18
- Line 6 - Luke 24:51; Hebrews 1:3; Mark 14:36
- Line 7 - Matthew 16:27; Acts 10:39
- Line 8 - John 14:15-20; Acts 1:7-8
- Line 9 - Matthew 16:18-19; Ephesians 5:26-27; Colossians 1:24
- Line 10 - John 20:22-23
- Line 11 - 1 Corinthians 15:51-54; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- Line 12 - 1 John 5:20

2. Create a Creed Puzzle

Write each line of the Creed on a popsicle stick. Mix them up and try to put them back in the correct order.

This is a fun way to memorize and understand the Creed as a family.

3. Creed Art Posters

Assign each line of the Creed to a family member and have them create a drawing or collage that represents that belief.

Display the posters as a visual reminder of your shared faith.

4. Creed Storybook

Turn the Creed into a simple illustrated storybook. Each page can explain one line in kid-friendly language with a picture. Great for younger children!

5. Creed Matching Game

Create cards with each line of the Creed and separate cards with the corresponding Bible verses. Mix them up and try to match them correctly.

6. Creed Timeline

Build a timeline showing the events mentioned in the Creed (e.g., Jesus' birth, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension). Use string and paper or a digital tool.

Building a Foundation

A Family Devotional with a Science Twist

Inside the church, we often talk about foundations—not just the kind that hold up buildings, but the kind that hold up our faith. The Bible uses this picture (called a metaphor) to help us understand how our lives should be built. Just like buildings need strong foundations to stand tall and safe, our lives need a strong spiritual foundation to grow and stay steady.

What Is a Foundation?

A foundation is the base of a building—the part that sits below ground and supports everything above it. Without a solid foundation, buildings can crack, sink, or even collapse.

Here's why foundations matter:

- ✓ They keep buildings from shifting or falling.
- ✓ They must be designed based on soil, water, and climate.
- ✓ Small problems in the foundation can lead to big trouble later.
- ✓ The right materials and techniques make all the difference.

Fun Foundation Facts

Deepest Foundation – Marina Bay Sands in Singapore goes 262 feet deep!

Oldest Foundation – Göbekli Tepe in Turkey dates back to 9600 BC.

Tallest Building Foundation – Burj Khalifa uses 192 piles driven deep into desert sand.

Floating Foundations – Venice buildings sit on wooden piles in mud!

Ice Foundations – Antarctic stations rest on moving glaciers.

Largest Concrete Pour – Three Gorges Dam used 20 million cubic yards of concrete.

Earthquake-Proof – Japan uses base isolation to let buildings “float.”

Underwater Foundations – Palm Jumeirah is built on sand and rock.

Moving Foundations – Millennium Tower in San Francisco has tilted over time.

Space Foundations – The ISS is anchored to a central truss—like a floating foundation!

What Does the Bible Say?

The Bible talks about foundations too! Here are some verses to explore together:

- Matthew 7:24-27 – Build your house on the rock.
- 1 Corinthians 3:11 – No foundation but Jesus.
- Ephesians 2:19-20 – Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.
- Matthew 16:18 – Jesus builds His church on a rock.
- 1 Peter 2:4-5 – We are living stones built into a spiritual house.

The Church's One Foundation

In the hymn by Samuel J. Stone, the church is described as being built on Jesus Christ. He is the foundation—not just of buildings, but of people. Without Him, the church would just be a social club. But with Him, it becomes a living, growing body of believers.

Hands-On Activities

1. Block Building Challenge

Build a tower with blocks stacked one on top of another. How tall can it go?

Now build with a wide base (4 blocks). How much taller can it go?

2. Marshmallow & Toothpick Towers

Use marshmallows and toothpicks to build the tallest tower you can. Try different base shapes—square, triangle, etc. Talk about what makes a strong foundation.

3. Paper & Tape Engineering

Build a tower using only paper and tape. Try to hold a book 6 inches off the ground.

Use one sheet of paper to build the tallest tower possible.

4. Foundation Detective

Give kids pictures of famous buildings (or use toy models) and ask them to guess what kind of foundation might be underneath. Then reveal the real answer and discuss why that foundation was chosen.

5. Sand vs. Rock Experiment

Use a tray of sand and a tray of rocks. Build a small structure (like a block tower) on each. Shake the trays gently to simulate an earthquake. Which one holds up better? Connect this to Matthew 7:24-27.

6. "Crack Watch" Journal

Have each family member keep a journal for a week, noting any "cracks" they notice in their spiritual foundation—like impatience, fear, or unkindness. At the end of the week, talk about how to repair those cracks with prayer, Scripture, and support.

7. Build a Foundation Collage

Cut out words or pictures from magazines that represent things that strengthen your faith (e.g., prayer, love, truth, Jesus). Glue them onto a large paper shaped like a building's foundation.

8. Scripture Brick Wall

Write key Bible verses on paper "bricks" and tape them to a wall or poster board to build a visual "wall of faith." Talk about how each verse strengthens your foundation.

Family Discussion Questions

- How will we grow if we use Jesus as our foundation?
- How can we build a strong spiritual foundation?
- How do friendships, habits, and choices affect our foundation?
- How can we help others build their lives on Jesus?
- What makes a foundation strong in real life? What makes it strong in our faith?
- Can a building be fixed if its foundation is cracked? Can our faith be repaired too?
- What are some things that weaken our spiritual foundation?
- What happens when someone tries to change or weaken a foundation?
- Why do buildings fall during earthquakes? What shakes our faith?
- How can we keep our “soil” (our hearts) healthy for a strong foundation?
- Can we see “cracks” in our own foundation? What might they be?
- What helps us repair those cracks?
- What does it mean that the church is built on Jesus?
- How is the church different from other groups or clubs?
- How can we help others build on the right foundation?
- What does it mean to be a “living stone” in God’s house (1 Peter 2:5)?
- What helps us grow taller and stronger in our faith?
- What happens if we try to grow without a foundation?
- How can we help each other stay grounded in truth?

The Church Universal

In The Church's One Foundation, S. J. Stone beautifully emphasizes the unity of the Church across all nations and generations:

Elect from every nation, Yet one o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation: One Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy name she blesses, Partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses, With every grace endued.

Unity in the Church is not just a poetic idea—it's a divine priority. Jesus Himself prayed for it in John 17, asking that His followers would be one, just as He and the Father are one. The psalmist echoes this in Psalm 133:1:

"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!"

We are all uniquely made—different thoughts, DNA, preferences, eye colors, and even internal anatomy (as I recently learned on a podcast!). Isn't that amazing? And yet, one thing binds us together: the love of Christ. This love is not earned by works, so no one can boast (Romans 8). It is a gift, freely given, and it is the foundation of our unity.

The book of Ephesians speaks powerfully to this truth:

"But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ. For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us. He did this by ending the system of law with its commandments and regulations. He made peace between Jews and Gentiles by creating in himself one new people from the two groups. Together as one body, Christ reconciled both groups to God by means of his death on the cross, and our hostility toward each other was put to death." (Ephesians 2:13-16)

Later, Paul urges believers to live out this unity:

Therefore I, a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God. Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace. For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all. (Ephesians 4:1-6)

S. J. Stone understood this truth deeply: we have One Lord, and unity is worth every effort. So how can we live out this unity in practical ways? Here are a few:

- **Humble yourself** - You don't always need to get your way. Unity often begins with surrender.
- **Pray for others** - Around the world, believers are suffering for the name of Jesus. Consider these sobering statistics: In 2024:
 - 4,476 Christians were murdered for faith-related reasons.
 - 12 Christians are killed daily—one every two hours.
 - 4,744 Christians were imprisoned or detained without trial.
 - 3,775 Christians were abducted.
 - 3,944 Christians were sexually assaulted or forcibly married.
 - 7,679 churches or Christian properties were attacked or closed.
 - 28,368 homes, shops, or businesses belonging to Christians were attacked.
 - 210,000 Christians were displaced from their homes due to persecution.
 - Nearly 55,000 believers were mentally or physically abused for their faith.

These are our brothers and sisters. We must remember them, pray for them, and support global church partners who need encouragement and strength.

- **Forgive others** - If someone hurts your feelings or speaks unkindly, choose grace. Overlook offenses and pursue peace.
- **Celebrate with others** - Rejoice when something good happens to someone else. Unity grows when we share in each other's joy.

Suggested Prayer:

Jesus, thank You so much for shedding Your blood for the Church. You alone are worthy to be the perfect sacrifice, and You loved us enough to become that sacrifice. Please forgive us when we hinder the unity of the Church by seeking our own interests instead of the interests of others. For our brothers and sisters around the globe, we ask that You protect them from hatred and abuse. May we remember them, and when they cry, may we cry with them. Thank You that we have one hope for our future, and we can count on the promise that one day You will return for Your bride. In Jesus' name, Amen.

A Confident Hope

Though with a scornful wonder men see her sore oppressed,
By schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed,
Yet saints their watch are keeping; their cry goes up, "How long?"
And soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.

This verse paints a heavy picture with words like **scornful, oppressed, rent, distressed, and weeping**. The author was grieving the brokenness of the church—divisions, heresies, and struggles that seemed impossible to overcome. His words reflect deep sorrow. Yet, even in the midst of such sadness, the hymn takes a sudden turn: "And soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song."

This declaration shines with confidence. The author could say it because his hope was firmly anchored in God. That is the nature of true Christian hope. It isn't wishful thinking, like saying, "I hope I get two pieces of dessert after dinner tonight." That kind of hope is uncertain and dependent on circumstances. Biblical hope, however, is certain. Hebrews 11:1 reminds us: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

Our confidence is not in circumstances but in the promises of God. Jesus declared that the gates of hell will not prevail against His church (Matthew 16:18). He promised that He will return for His bride. And every promise of God is as sure as His character – for when God makes a promise, He keeps it. So, even in seasons of sorrow, division, or struggle, we hold on to a confident hope: the night will give way to the morning, and mourning will turn into song.

Reflection Questions:

1. Where in your life right now do you feel the weight of "weeping" or discouragement?
2. How does the certainty of God's promises give you confidence in those areas?
3. What is one promise from Scripture you can cling to this week as a source of hope?
4. How can you encourage someone else who is struggling, by pointing them toward this confident hope?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You that our hope in You is secure and unshakable. When we face seasons of sorrow, discouragement, or division, remind us of Your promises. Help us to cling to the truth that You are faithful, that You keep Your word, and that our weeping will one day turn into joy. Strengthen our faith and let our lives point others to the confident hope we have in Christ. In His name we pray, Amen.

Mid Toil and Tribulation: A Confident Rest

Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation of peace forevermore;
'Til, with the vision glorious, her longing eyes are blessed,
And the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.

It's never easy to talk about war. When this hymn was written, the memory of the American Civil War (one of the deadliest conflicts of the time) was still fresh. Even though the author was British, he would have known of its horrors. So when he wrote the words "tumult of her war," he chose them carefully.

But there is a greater conflict than battles fought between nations. The church is engaged in a spiritual war—an unseen struggle against the powers of darkness. That's why the Apostle Paul reminds us in Ephesians 6 that we must "put on the full armor of God" to stand strong.

Even though these battles are real and sometimes painful, the hymn points us toward the end of the story: one day the war will be over, the battle finished, and the church will finally be at rest in the presence of Christ. This is our great hope—peace forevermore.

Activities for Kids

1. Armor Drawing

Draw a soldier wearing the armor of God (belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the Spirit, shoes of peace). Next to each piece, write down what it means.

2. Armor Charades

Act out putting on a piece of armor. Can your family guess which piece it is and what it represents?

3. Shield Challenge

Use pillows or paper shields to act out "blocking fiery arrows." Talk about how faith protects us when life feels scary or hard.

4. Prayer Watch

Make a simple "prayer shield" (a decorated paper shield). Write down the names of people you want to pray for. Use it as a reminder that part of our battle is praying for one another.

5. Peace Walk

Put on shoes and walk around your house or yard while saying something about Jesus' Good News. Remember—the "shoes of peace" are about carrying the message of Christ to others!

Questions to Consider

1. What does it mean that we are at war with spiritual enemies, not people?
2. Why do you think Paul compared our faith to armor?
3. Which piece of the armor of God do you feel strongest in right now? Which one do you need to work on?
4. How can being part of the church family help us feel safe and strong in our battles?
5. What do you think it will be like when the "church victorious shall be the church at rest"?

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank You that You give us armor to stand strong in this world. Help us to hold on to truth, to walk in peace, to trust You with faith, and to use Your Word as our sword. Give us courage in our struggles and help us remember that one day You will bring peace forevermore. Until that day, keep us faithful, prayerful, and full of hope. Amen.



Yet She On Earth Hath Union

Yet she on earth hath union with God the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won:
O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we
Like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with Thee.

This verse reminds us that the church is not just people gathered in a building—it's a living union with God Himself, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. What makes the church strong and unshakable is not programs, music, or traditions, but the presence of God dwelling with His people. It also points to the mysterious bond we share with believers who have already gone to be with Christ. The hymn calls this "mystic sweet communion." That means the church on earth is connected to the church in heaven. Together, we belong to one family in Christ, spanning generations, nations, and even eternity. The prayer of the hymn is simple: that God would give us grace to live humble, faithful lives now so that one day we, too, may join the saints in heaven and dwell forever with Him.

Activities for Kids

1. **Family Portrait of Faith** - Draw a big family picture, but instead of just your family, include people who follow Jesus around the world. Remember, they are all part of God's family too!
2. **Heaven Connection** - Make a paper chain. On each link, write the name of someone you know who follows Jesus (friends, family, church members). Add links for people in the Bible, or missionaries today. Talk about how the chain represents our connection as the body of Christ.
3. **Communion Reminder** - Bake or share bread together as a family. Talk about how sharing the Lord's Supper reminds us that we are one with Jesus and one with each other.
4. **Prayer Circle** - Sit in a circle and pray for different groups of Christians: people in your church, believers in other countries, and those who are now with Jesus in heaven.

Questions to Consider

- What does it mean that the church is united with "God the Three in One"?
- Why do you think the hymn calls our connection with the saints in heaven a "mystic sweet communion"?
- How does knowing you are part of God's big family encourage you when you feel lonely?
- Who do you know that has "finished the race" of faith and is now with Jesus? How does their example inspire you?
- What does it mean to be "meek and lowly" like Jesus—and how can you practice that this week?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You that the church is not just what we see on Sundays but a family that stretches across the whole world and into eternity. Thank You for uniting us with You through Jesus, and for connecting us to believers past, present, and future.

Give us grace to live humble, faithful lives so that one day we may join the great communion of saints in heaven. In Jesus' name, Amen.

The Value of Discipleship

"Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly, as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom." – Colossians 3:16

S. J. Stone was a defender of the faith. He longed for people to worship God with understanding, to grasp the meaning of prayers and creeds, and to stand firm on God's Word even when it was challenged from within the church. But what shaped a man with the heart of a poet and the strength of a prizefighter into such a steadfast believer? The answer is discipleship. God worked in Stone's heart from an early age through the faithful influence of a mentor—his father. Stone's father was a Hebrew scholar who not only loved the Scriptures but lived them out. His life was marked by a quiet, steady trust in God. One story shows this powerfully:

"There was an endowment of only £13 per annum, and the heavy expenses of the parish became a great burden. Yet my father kept his quietness of mind in steady trust. One day the news came that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners would endow the living with £300 a year and build a vicarage. I remember coming home late that evening, eager to share in the excitement. But I found my father quietly reading his Hebrew Bible, calm and unmoved. When I offered my congratulations, he simply said—with a serenity that deeply impressed me—that the Lord always answers prayer and fulfills His promises in His own time. Then he returned to his reading, as though this blessing was no surprise, but simply the faithfulness of God."

This simple but profound example shaped John's faith. His father's discipleship was not a formal program, but the everyday consistency of living faithfully before his family. Watching a more mature believer, John grew in his understanding of who God is and what it means to trust Him fully. This is the essence of discipleship: one life pointing another life to Christ. It is teaching not only by words but by example. It is faith lived in such a way that others are encouraged to follow Jesus more closely. We may never fully see the results of our influence. John's father likely never imagined that his example would help inspire his son to write a hymn that continues to glorify God and encourage believers more than 125 years later.

Reflection Questions

1. Who has discipled you—formally or informally—by showing you what it looks like to follow Jesus?
2. How did their example strengthen your faith?
3. Who in your life could benefit from your encouragement, prayers, or example right now?
4. What everyday opportunities do you have to point others toward Christ (at home, work, school, or church)?
5. How can you become more intentional about discipling others—not just with words, but through consistent actions and attitudes?
6. Imagine someone telling a story about your faith years from now. What kind of legacy of discipleship would you want to leave behind?

Samuel J. Stone and the Bully

Samuel J. Stone was a gifted poet who loved stories of knights, lords, and ladies. Because of this, he admired brave heroes who stood up for what was right. He especially disliked seeing people mistreat one another. He lived by the Golden Rule:

“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

His strong sense of justice sometimes got him into trouble. In his biography, F.G. Ellerton shares this story:

“There was a certain idle corner on the way from the school to the church which was the favorite spot for the rough boys of the town. They would often bother the children walking to church. One Sunday, Samuel saw one of his little girls doubled over in pain from a blow given by a big, hulking boy. All of Stone’s impulsive chivalry caught fire. Maybe he remembered how the poet Keats once stood up to a bully. Whatever the case, he marched up to the boy, gave him a stern talking-to—and a firm cuff to finish it off. It had a strong effect on the rough crowd in the area. But Stone later admitted that his ‘knight-errantry’ had taken the wrong form. He resolved never again to be both judge and executioner.”

Family Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think the boy hit the girl?
2. Why might some kids want to annoy others on their way to church?
3. Was it right or wrong for Samuel J. Stone to hit the boy?
4. What should we do when we see someone mistreating another person?
5. Should Stone have defended the girl? If so, how?
6. When we feel angry—even for a good reason—what is the right way to handle that anger?
7. What Bible verses could help guide us in this situation? (Suggestions for parents: Romans 12:17; Psalm 82:4)
8. How can you show kindness to someone when others are being mean to them?
9. What does it mean to be brave in a situation like this?
10. What does forgiveness look like in this story? Should Stone forgive the boy? Should the girl forgive the boy?

Activity Ideas

- Have each family member share one way they can live out the Golden Rule this week
- Write notes of encouragement to someone who might be feeling left out or mistreated
- Pray together for people who are being bullied and for those who bully others.

Family Worship:

Write Your Own Poetry!

S. J. Stone, who wrote *The Church's One Foundation*, was not only a hymn writer but also a gifted poet. Poetry is a beautiful and artistic way to express thoughts and emotions using words. And the best part? There are no strict rules! You don't need to worry about grammar, punctuation, or structure. Your poem can rhyme—or not. It can have rhythm—or be completely freeform. Some poems even use made-up words to express feelings or ideas!

Poetry in the Bible

The Bible is full of poetry! In fact, all but seven books contain some form of poem or hymn. Many of these are expressions of worship—declaring who God is and what we think of Him. That's what worship is: expressing love, awe, and truth about God. Poetry can be a free and creative way to worship, using your own words to reflect what you know and love about God.

Getting Started: Ideas for Your Own Worship Poem

If writing without structure feels overwhelming, many poets create their own "rules" to guide them. Here are some fun ways to begin:

1. Acrostic Poem

Choose a word like FOUNDATION and write a line that begins with each letter.
(You can also try using your name, a Bible word, or even the whole alphabet!)

2. Syllable Pattern

Try using a repeated syllable count like 7.6 (7 syllables, then 6 syllables), just like *The Church's One Foundation*. (Or invent your own pattern—maybe 5.5.5 or 8.8.8!)

3. Rhyming Pattern

Use a simple rhyme scheme like AABB: Roses are red, Violets are blue, Sugar is sweet, And so are you. (Or try ABAB, ABCB, or something totally new!)

4. Syllables + Rhyming

Combine both for a more musical feel.

5. Word Brainstorm

Think of all the words that describe Jesus. Then turn them into -ing words: Loving, Healing, Teaching, Saving, Guiding... Use these as the building blocks of your poem.

[illegible]

The image shows a worksheet with a light blue background and rounded corners. At the top center, there is a large, bold, black title "Now It's Your Turn!". Below the title, there is a paragraph of text in a smaller, regular black font: "Take a few minutes to create something. Let your words be a gift of worship. Whether it's simple or elaborate, rhymed or freeform, your poem can be a beautiful offering to God." The lower two-thirds of the page are filled with horizontal dashed lines, providing space for writing. The entire page is framed by a decorative border featuring a repeating pattern of small, stylized flowers or leaves in shades of green and yellow.

[illegible]

Your Turn to Write a HYMN

After studying this hymn and learning about its writer, you may feel inspired to create a hymn of your own. If so, here's a simple guide to get you started:

Step 1 - Choose Your Inspiration

Reflect on an attribute of God, His works, or His love that deeply inspires you. Let this truth become the foundation of your hymn.

Step 2 - Write Your Poem

Craft your words into a poem. Aim for lines that rhyme and follow a steady rhythm. You may:

- Create a repeating section (a chorus) that can be sung after each verse.
- Or, like S. J. Stone, write a series of verses without a chorus.

Step 3 - Add a Melody

Think of a melody that you love—or create one of your own. Write it down so your hymn can be sung and shared.



And just like that, you have a brand-new hymn—an offering of praise and glory to God.

The Church's One Foundation

E	P	R	E	S	C	X	B	E	J	J	E	S	U	S	D	Q	F
D	L	N	U	C	U	R	S	A	I	N	T	S	W	A	E	N	C
D	O	E	J	C	H	S	E	Y	V	H	S	L	O	R	F	K	C
M	X	G	C	I	Y	E	T	A	U	H	G	O	R	J	E	H	H
Q	T	N	X	T	O	Z	R	A	T	H	Y	R	D	F	N	E	U
B	V	A	F	A	I	T	H	I	I	I	N	D	A	K	D	A	R
V	R	T	C	P	L	J	J	V	S	N	O	K	U	C	A	V	C
X	N	I	F	G	U	I	D	E	V	H	C	N	X	T	E	E	H
M	U	O	D	A	G	F	O	U	N	D	A	T	I	O	N	N	L
M	B	N	U	E	Q	R	U	Z	H	C	H	R	I	S	T	V	K
J	S	A	L	V	A	T	I	O	N	C	Q	H	G	F	B	X	S
G	P	I	N	W	R	P	Z	U	O	R	R	H	O	L	Y	X	N

Find the following words in the puzzle.
Words are hidden →, ↓, and ↘.

FOUNDATION
SALVATION
CREATION
CHERISH
SUSTAIN
CHURCH
CHRIST

HEAVEN
NATION
SAINTS
DEFEND
JESUS
BRIDE
ELECT

FAITH
GRACE
GUIDE
LORD
WORD
HOLY

Reflection Questions

1. After digging into this song, which verse is most meaningful to you and why?

[illegible]

2. What does singing this song teach you about God?

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dashed lines, typical of primary-ruled notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.

Reflection Questions

3. Write a prayer about the unity of the church.

[illegible]

Reflection Questions

4. Write a letter to someone who is struggling in their faith, encouraging them to rebuild their foundation on Jesus.

This image shows a full page of primary-ruled paper. It features multiple sets of horizontal dashed lines spaced evenly down the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. The background is white, and there are no margins or other markings present.

Additional Resources

Recordings of the Hymn

- Traditional - tinyurl.com/ys6h77hr
- Norton Hall Band - tinyurl.com/4v9a2f6a
- Shades Mountain Community Church - tinyurl.com/2wfadraf

Information about the Poet

- tinyurl.com/4fwr88ax
- tinyurl.com/yzbss7bm
- tinyurl.com/eh3wfyht

Information about the Melody

- tinyurl.com/ypmk57jt

